



Georgia

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday
March 2,
2023

DAILY REPORT

27th
Legislative
Day

House Budget & Research Office
(404) 656-5050

- The House will reconvene for its 28th Legislative Day on Monday, March 6 at 10:00 a.m.
- Eight bills / resolutions are expected to be debated on the floor.

Today on the Floor

Rules Calendar

HB 31 Conservation and natural resources; Hazardous Waste Trust Fund; dedicate proceeds of certain hazardous waste fees

Bill Summary: HB 31 amends O.C.G.A. 12-8-95, relating to the Hazardous Waste Trust Fund, by dedicating hazardous waste management and substance reporting fees collected by the state to the Hazardous Waste Trust Fund.

Authored By: Rep. Debbie Buckner (137th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 172 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 144 George L. Burgess Act; enact

Bill Summary: HB 144 updates the rights of a ward in a guardianship by clarifying that a ward can communicate freely and privately with people other than the guardian through visitation, telephone calls, email, or personal mail. If a guardian violates the right of the ward to communicate, visit, or interact with others, in O.C.G.A. 29-4-22(b), then a ward or interested party can petition the court with evidence alleging that the guardian violated that right.

If the court finds the guardian violated the ward's right, then a court can impose a maximum fine of \$1,000 for each violation. After two violations have been reported and ruled on by a court, the court can impose temporary suspension of the guardianship and appoint another guardian until the violations are resolved.

Authored By: Rep. Regina Lewis-Ward (115th)
House Juvenile Justice
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 167 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-23-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 163 Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce; student loan repayment for medical examiners employed by the Division of Forensic Sciences of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation; provide

Bill Summary: House Bill 163 establishes a student loan repayment program for full-time medical examiners employed with the Division of Forensic Sciences of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. The total repayment amount must not exceed \$120,000 or the total student debt amount, whichever is less, and the payments will be paid in annual installments, for a period not exceeding five years. The Georgia Student Finance Authority is authorized to establish rules and regulations to implement the program and the program is contingent upon the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly.

Authored By: Rep. Lauren McDonald (26th)
House Higher Education
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 172 Nays: 1

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 187 Crimes and offenses; authorize for-profit credit repair services

Bill Summary: HB 187 amends O.C.G.A. 16-9-59 to allow for-profit credit repair organizations to operate in Georgia once a credit repair organization obtains a bond of \$100,000 and meets certain criteria.

Authorized By: Rep. Rob Leverett (123rd)
House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: Nays:
Floor Action: Recommit to Committee

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-22-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 212 Niche-Beauty Services Opportunity Act; enact

Bill Summary: HB 212 repeals and replaces the Code sections pertaining to cosmetology by modernizing and revising the following provisions. The Code allows for the following license categories: barber II; barber II apprentice; esthetician; esthetician apprentice; hair designer; hair designer apprentice; hair removal technician; hair removal apprentice; instructor; master barber; master barber apprentice; master cosmetologist; master cosmetologist apprentice; nail technician; and nail technician apprentice.

The State Board of Cosmetology and Barbers will remain in existence, and the board membership and membership terms will remain the same. All board rules and regulations will remain in existence. The board consists of nine members, and the board will be required to meet at least once a year to adopt rules and regulations, and handle other required matters.

Licenses are required for an individual to engage in, teach, hold themselves out as licensed in, or advertise that they are qualified to offer services in the practice of barbering II, aesthetics, hair design, master barbering, master cosmetology, or nail care. It is unlawful to own, operate, or open a service salon or school of instruction without a license.

The following are exempt from licensing: braiding hair by hairweaving, wrapping, or using extensions; applying cosmetics; washing, shampooing, combing, or brushing hair in a licensed service salon, provided that activities do not include application or removal of any chemicals that alter hair structure; and washing hair, blow drying or styling hair, threading, or any combination of those activities.

In order for an individual to wash hair, blow dry or style hair, engage in threading, or do any combination of those activities for compensation, they must complete a health and safety course approved by the board for a maximum of four hours and maintain proof of course completion.

To obtain an occupational license, an applicant must be at least 17 years old, meet minimum education requirements, and meet the study course requirement at a board-approved school or the apprentice requirement. Licenses must be stored in a conspicuous place, and are renewable for a period of two years. Upon renewal, a licensee must have proof of five hours of continuing education taken during the two-year term. The board can require that either three or four hours of continuing education be satisfied by a health and safety course.

The bill provides for a license by endorsement for an applicant who holds a license or certification in another state as long as the applicant completes the application and is in good standing in the other state. The board can issue an expedited license by endorsement to any occupational license to any current or discharged member of the military who holds a license in another state.

A person can learn under one of the apprentice licenses if they are at least 16 years of age and file the required application. These licenses are effective for a four-year period and are not eligible for renewal.

The board has the power to: refuse to grant, renew, or restore a license; revoke a license; suspend any license for a definite period of time or an indefinite period of time; administer a reprimand; require coursework; limit or restrict a license as the board deems necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare; and impose a fine independent of any other action.

For more strenuous violations, the board can impose an additional \$500 fine for each violation, although a violation of not following board rules and regulations is only punishable by a maximum fine of \$100 for the first violation, \$200 for the second violation, and \$300 for any subsequent violation.

Authored By: Rep. David Jenkins (136th)
House Regulated Industries
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: Nays:
Floor Action: Tabled

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-21-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 227 Crimes and offenses; offense of criminal interference with critical infrastructure; provide

Bill Summary: HB 227 clarifies that the offense of criminal damage to property in the first degree can be committed through electronic means against critical infrastructure or any vital public service. The penalty for this crime is increased to imprisonment of between two to 20 years. The bill revises the misdemeanor crime of interfering with property of public utility companies, municipalities, or political subdivisions owning critical infrastructure, by prohibiting a person from altering or interfering with critical infrastructure. The definition for "critical infrastructure" in O.C.G.A. 16-11-220 is amended to include other vital public services.

Authored By: Rep. Rob Leverett (123rd)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 174 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 230 Revenue and taxation; qualified consolidated government special purpose local option sales tax; provide

Bill Summary: HB 230 amends O.C.G.A. 48-8-6, relating to sales and use taxes, to allow for a qualified consolidated government to implement a special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) for a coliseum capital outlay project, which is defined as any capital outlay project related to a multiuse coliseum or civic center type of facility. The tax will be set at a rate of 0.5 percent. The bill provides for the mechanism to implement the SPLOST as well as the ballot language to be used.

Authored By: Rep. Mark Newton (127th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 165 Nays: 7

Rule Applied: Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 244 Board of Natural Resources; effective date for certain rules and regulations; extend

Bill Summary: HB 244 amends O.C.G.A. 27-1-39 by extending the date for which the rules and regulations of the Board of Natural Resources are in effect. The bill amends O.C.G.A. 24-4-136 by requiring licensed seafood dealers to report non-activity to the department in the same manner as provided by rule or regulation.

O.C.G.A. 27-4-188 is revised by defining the term "cage" and stipulates that for a larger outer unit holding smaller units inside, the entire unit should be treated as a single cage. Language is updated to give the department authority over decisions regarding whether or not violators of O.C.G.A. 27-2-25 should have their harvester permit revoked. HB 244 eliminates the current cage fee in effect, and makes it legal to hunt bobcat and fox using electronic calls or sounds.

Authored By: Rep. Jesse Petrea (166th)
House Game, Fish, & Parks
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 170 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-21-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 264 Revenue and taxation; handling of appeals of property tax assessments; revise certain deadlines and procedures

Bill Summary: HB 264 amends O.C.G.A. 48-5-311, relating to the creation of county boards of equalization, duties, review of assessments, and appeals, by changing the following deadlines related to appeals of property tax assessments.

The deadline for the county board of tax assessors to notify a taxpayer of any corrections or changes is changed from 180 days to 90 days after receipt of a notice of appeal. The deadline for county boards of equalization to hold a hearing on questions presented in an appeal is changed from 180 days to 90 days from the receipt of a notice of appeal. The time period for a county board of tax assessors to review a taxpayer's written appeal is changed from 90 days to 60 days. The deadline for a taxpayer to deem changes unacceptable is changed from 30 days to 15 days from the mailing of a notice of changes made following a written appeal by the county board of tax assessors. The time period for a county board of tax assessors to send or deliver documentation to an appeal administrator is changed from 30 days to 15 days from a taxpayer rejecting changes. The deadline for a taxpayer to forward an appeal to the board of equalization is changed from 30 days to 15 days following the mailing of a county board of tax assessors notice of no changes or corrections.

In the case of certain actions not being taken by the county board of tax assessors within 90 days, appeals will be forwarded to the county board of equalization. If a hearing is not scheduled within 180 days from the date of an appeal being sent to an appeal administrator, the assessed fair market value for the taxpayer's property for the tax year in question will default to the property value asserted by the taxpayer in the appeal. A fair market value set in this manner may not be used as a comparison in future tax appeals. The bill allows for electronic notifications from the county board of equalization for notices of hearings or decisions if the taxpayer or taxpayer's authorized agent approves such correspondence.

The bill amends O.C.G.A. 48-5-299, relating to changing real property values established by appeal in prior year or stipulated by agreement, by striking language stating that a taxpayer failing to attend an appeal hearing or provide written evidence is as an exception for the board of tax assessors to be unable to raise a new valuation for two successive years. The bill strikes exception language that includes errors in a description or characterization of property in the records of the board of tax assessors' records.

Authored By: Rep. Vance Smith (138th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 173 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 273 Board of Natural Resources; extend date by which rules and regulations must be in effect for purposes of establishing criminal violations

Bill Summary: HB 273 revises the effective date for rules and regulations promulgated by the Board of Natural Resources to January 1, 2023.

The bill makes the following changes to the composition of the Sapelo Island Heritage Authority: allows the governor to appoint a designee; increases the number of members from the Hog Hammock community from one to two; removes the commissioner of the Human Relations; and designates the commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources the chairperson and the governor as the vice chairperson of the authority.

Authored By: Rep. Buddy DeLoach (167th)
House Natural Resources & Environment
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 171 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Open
Committee 02-23-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 295 Insurance; consumer protections against surprise billing; revise certain procedures

Bill Summary: HB 95 relates to surprise billing and clarifies provisions relating to arbitration. The bill requires the designation of plans that are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the 'Employee

Retirement Income Security Act of 1974'. The bill extends the time insurers have to submit data after an arbitration request is made from 30 to 60 days.

Authored By: Rep. Lee Hawkins (27th)
House Insurance
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 165 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-22-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 302 Crimes and offenses; issuance of a temporary or permanent protective order by the court; provide

Bill Summary: HB 302 allows courts to issue either temporary or permanent protective orders to protect against conduct that constitutes stalking.

Authored By: Rep. Lehman Franklin (160th)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 172 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 327 Crimes and offenses; incest; include step-grandparent and step-grandchild relationship

Bill Summary: HB 327 adds a grandparent and step-grandchild to O.C.G.A. 16-6-22(a)(4), which is a list of people whom it is prohibited to have sexual intercourse or sodomy with. Existing language applies to a grandparent and grandchild.

Authored By: Rep. Mike Cameron (1st)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 166 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 348 Motor vehicles; standards for signs warning of use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices; provide

Bill Summary: HB 348 requires warning signs for traffic safety enforcement devices and school zone speed limit reduction to display flashing yellow lights while the speed reduction is in effect. The speed limit may be enforced 30 minutes prior to and 30 minutes after the school starts; 30 minutes prior to and 30 minutes after the school dismisses unless the school campus is bisected by a highway; and when the driver is 10 miles per hour over the speed limit.

When a citation is issued, the driver will receive an assigned hearing date that must be within 60 days of issuance of the citation. If a penalty is unpaid 30 days after a final notice has been mailed, the vehicle's registration cannot be renewed until the penalty and late fees have been collected.

The bill requires an assigned hearing date to be issued with a citation for improperly overtaking a school bus. Registration of the vehicle cannot be renewed until the penalty and late fees are collected.

Authored By: Rep. J Collins (71st)
House Motor Vehicles
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 168 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 362 Insurance; benefit provider to disclose certain payments to a treating healthcare provider; provide

Bill Summary: HB 362 requires benefit providers to provide a written account of payments and reimbursements for services to treating providers upon 30 days of a request being made.

Authored By: Rep. Karen Mathiak (74th)
House Insurance
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 164 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-22-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 373 State holidays; September 11 as First Responders Appreciation Day; designate

Bill Summary: HB 373 designates September 11 of each year as "First Responders Appreciation Day".

Authored By: Rep. Sheila Jones (60th)
House Special Rules
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 173 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Open
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 375 Guardian and ward; authority of conservator and cooperation with guardian or other interested parties; define gross settlement

Bill Summary: HB 375, relating to conservatorships and guardians, defines "gross settlement" as the present value of all amounts paid or to be paid in settlement of the claim, including: cash; medical expenses; expenses of litigation; attorney's fees; and any amounts allotted to a structured settlement or other similar financial arrangement.

Authored By: Rep. Rob Leverett (123rd)
House Judiciary
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 161 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-23-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 384 Insurance; annual notification by insurers to male insureds of coverage for prostate-specific antigen tests; provide

Bill Summary: HB 384 requires insurers to notify covered males about annual prostate-specific antigen tests. This notification applies to covered males who are at least 45 years old and if ordered by a physician, those age 40 years and older.

Authored By: Rep. Sharon Henderson (113th)
House Insurance
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 169 Nays: 1

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 404 Safe at Home Act; enact

Bill Summary: HB 404, relating to landlords and tenants, requires that rental properties are fit for human habitation. The bill includes cooling as a utility that cannot be shut off prior to an eviction action. Landlords are prohibited from requiring a security deposit that exceeds two months' rent. A tenant, when they fail to pay charges owed to landlord, is afforded a three business day written notice period prior to an eviction proceeding being filed. The eviction notice will be posted conspicuously on the property door in a sealed envelope and delivered via any methods agreed to in the rental agreement.

Authored By: Rep. Kasey Carpenter (4th)
House Judiciary
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 168 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 408 Sales and use tax; exemption for competitive projects of regional significance; change sunset provision

Bill Summary: HB 408 amends O.C.G.A. 48-8-3, relating to sales and use tax exemptions, to extend the sunset date for an exemption on sales of tangible personal property used for construction of a competitive project of regional significant to December 31, 2026.

Authored By: Rep. Bruce Williamson (112th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 169 Nays: 2

Rule Applied: Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 453 Health; ambulance services pay annual license fee; repeal requirement

Bill Summary: HB 453 repeals the annual ambulance service license fee which is required for ambulance service providers.

Authored By: Rep. Scott Hilton (48th)
House Public Health
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 166 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 470 Georgia Candor Act; enact

Bill Summary: HB 470 allows for a healthcare provider jointly with a healthcare entity following an adverse healthcare incident to provide the patient within 150 days of the incident date with written notice of wanting to have an open discussion. If the patient agrees to engage in the open discussion, any communications or offers made between the two parties will not be considered an admission of liability, will be privileged and confidential, and will not be admissible as evidence or discoverable.

The healthcare provider must investigate how the adverse healthcare incident occurred, must disclose results of the investigation to the patient, and may disclose what subsequent measures will be taken so the incident at issue does not reoccur. Communications, records, and materials subject to discovery that were not prepared specifically for use in an open discussion remain not confidential.

The statute of limitations is tolled for patients not represented by an attorney from the date an open discussion is agreed to until the date of resolution or from the date the patient retains an attorney, whichever comes first. If a healthcare provider or facility determines compensation is warranted, the provider or facility will provide the patient with a written offer within 60 days of the patient agreeing in writing to engage in an open discussion unless the time frame is extended by both parties. Participation in the open discussion process is voluntary and no one shall be pressured or coerced to participate.

The bill provides updates on O.C.G.A. 31-33-3 with respect to medical records by allowing for production of records, rather than solely copying and mailing of records to account for electronic records.

Authored By: Rep. Sharon Cooper (45th)
House Judiciary
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 163 Nays: 1

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 520 Buildings and housing; tenant selection; revise provisions

Bill Summary: HB 520 authorizes the Department of Community Health (DCH) to collaborate with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) to study the psychiatric treatment residential facilities referral processes with the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) and Department of Human Services (DHS). The study will be submitted to the governor and General Assembly no later than December 1, 2023.

The bill prohibits health benefit plans from implementing step therapy protocol for medications prescribed to treat severe mental illness.

DBHDD is authorized to work with the Behavioral Innovation and Reform Commission (BHIRC), the Department of Corrections (DOC), DJJ, the Department of Community Supervision (DCS), and other relevant experts to create guidance for standardized terminology such as the definition of serious mental illness.

Definitions for homeless individuals, recidivism, and other terms may also be developed. Such preliminary definitions will be proposed no later than December 1, 2023. DBHDD will develop a pilot at identified sites to test the use of standardized terminology prior to state-wide rollout, and these definitions will be finalized and adopted by DBHDD and other relevant agencies by December 31, 2023.

DBHDD will also work with individuals to provide county-based coordinators to work with criminal justice and behavioral health providers to ensure resources are effectively utilized, and eliminate barriers to reduce jail admission of those in a mental health crisis who do not pose a public safety risk. These activities will be completed subject to funding through contracts, employees, and/or community services boards. Such coordinators will work to build relationships between local law enforcement agencies and behavioral health providers, and engage with referral sources.

A state-wide public-private partnership will be established by DBHDD to serve as a clearinghouse for best practices, information, and resources to support "familiar faces". These are individuals with serious mental illness who have frequent contact with criminal justice, homeless, and behavioral health systems. The clearinghouse can be located at a higher education institution, nonprofit organization, or other appropriate entity to utilize expertise from state agencies, law enforcement agencies, behavioral health providers, and others.

The clearinghouse will: provide technical assistance to counties; host information-sharing events with relevant stakeholders; develop diversion programs and jail-based behavioral health screening programs; share evidence-based practices; act as a repository for criminal justice and behavioral health information; and organize state interagency justice, mental health, and substance abuse activities. The clearinghouse will provide reports to the General Assembly covering criminal justice and behavioral health initiatives and their impact, the accessibility of community-based behavioral health treatment for adults and children, and the effect of community diversion alternatives.

Subject to appropriations, DBHDD will develop a pilot program to assist jails in implementing behavioral health screening programs and protocols. The department will also create a grant program to create or expand jail in-reach and reentry programs which will focus on "familiar faces" and connect individuals with community resources. DBHDD will provide an annual report to the governor and General Assembly about distributed grant funding, pilot programs' progress, and recommendations for state-wide expansion.

A comprehensive study on the public behavioral health workforce will be conducted by DBHDD to understand recruitment and retention issues, and target solutions to help with shortages. The study will include a review of staffing, vacancies, and salary comparisons to the private sector and surrounding states. This study will be submitted to the governor, General Assembly, BHIRC, and Office of Health Strategy and Coordination (OHSC) by December 1, 2023.

Two peer support specialists are added to BHIRC membership. BHIRC, with DBHDD, is required to develop a common definition of "serious mental illness" and include "familiar faces" to initiative coordination. The commission is also tasked with creating a multi-year plan to expand the use of forensic peer mentors.

BHIRC is also required to establish a task force to build a continuum of care. The task force will comprehensively study access to inpatient behavioral health beds, and make recommendations on needed capacity building, youth specific care, and autism spectrum-related care. The task force will also formally review competency evaluation and restoration challenges, and forensic laws and regulations that affect those interacting with the behavioral health and criminal justice systems. This task force will study increased capacity of child and adolescent substance misuse intensive outpatient treatment programs. Task force studies will be submitted to BHIRC, the governor, General Assembly, and OHSC by December 1, 2023.

BHIRC will convene a task force to review the effect of behavioral health on homeless populations across the state. This task force will be appointed by BHIRC chairpersons, and consist of state and local officials, advocates, experts, and other stakeholders. Task force activities will include identifying agencies and organizations providing services and funding for the homeless population, and the recommendation of the following: how to improve coordination of government agencies, nonprofit organizations, services, and funds; system for government agencies and nonprofits to share data about served individuals; ways to improve DOC transitions for housing and wrap-around services; and ways to reduce the number of people with behavioral health conditions that are homeless. Task force studies will be submitted to BHIRC, the governor, General Assembly, and

OHSC by December 1, 2023.

The bill eliminates provisions regarding the assisted outpatient treatment program relating to participant eligibility. Language requiring DBHDD to publish a biennial state plan for disability services and submit an annual report regarding the State Plan for Coordinated System of Care are repealed.

Members of the Behavioral Health Coordinating Council are allowed to appoint delegates to attend meetings on their behalf. A physician's certificate or affidavit is required to be attached to a court order for involuntary treatment. Personally identifying information will be removed from such document.

OHSC is required to study behavioral health provider licensing requirements to identify barriers to entry or licensure. Professional boards to be included in the study are Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists; State Board of Examiners of Psychologists; and the Georgia Board of Nursing. The study will update licensing application and renewal systems, create pathways for foreign-trained practitioners, and update practicum and supervision requirements. The Secretary of State and its professional licensing division are required to fully cooperate with OHSC on such study. The study will be submitted to the governor, General Assembly, Secretary of State, and BHIRC by December 1, 2023. The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists is authorized to waive experience requirements for applicants licensed under another state that have maintained good standing in that jurisdiction for at least two years.

The Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists and the Georgia Board of Nursing are authorized to manage a professional health program for impaired health care professionals across the state. To perform this duty, the board will enter into a contract with an organization or medical professional association that conducts health programs to monitor and rehabilitate the impaired health care professional based on their fitness and risk to public safety. Any information or documents related to such monitoring or rehabilitation are confidential and not subject to open records and will not be available for court subpoenas or discovery proceedings. The health care professional will be responsible for the cost of program participation, and contracting entities are immune from any liability that may incur under performance of the contract.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) will hire a director as the executive head of the Georgia Data Analytic Center (GDAC). GDAC will serve as the central repository for Georgia from which data can be released to requesting agencies. The director will have the authority to review data sharing disputes between executive state agencies when a data request made by one agency is denied by another with the reasoning that it would violate state or federal law. If the director determines such a request does not break the law, the agency is compelled to cooperate with such request. Agencies are able to appeal the director's decision to the Governor's executive counsel who can, with the GDAC director, consult the attorney general if needed. A data advisory group will be formed by GDAC to assist with such activities.

The DCH will ensure that the Medicaid program includes reimbursement for psychological diagnostic assessments and treatment and family therapy services; reimbursement for licensed professional counselors, licensed marriage and family therapists, and certified peer specialists; psychiatric hospitals as eligible for inpatient care for those under the age of 21 years enrolled in fee-for-service Medicaid; updates of reimbursement rates for the assessment and treatment of autism spectrum disorder in collaboration with relevant agencies and organizations; and therapeutic foster care for those under the age of 21 years. Necessary requests for Medicaid state plan amendments or waivers will be made to the United States Department of Health and Human Services by December 1, 2023. DCH is also required to take necessary steps to ensure the receipt of relevant federal funds to provide services, such as housing and employment supports and case management, for recipients and their caregivers if they are under the age of 19 years.

The Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce is required to work with state licensing boards to establish the Georgia Health Care Professionals Data System to collect and share de-identified

descriptive data about licensed health care professionals in Georgia. Such information will be stored in a publicly accessible repository on the board's website. Information will include demographics and geographical distribution of licensed health care professionals across the state. Licensing boards must provide such data upon request or up to two times annually as required. Information provided by licensing boards will include age, race, gender, ethnicity, language spoken at home, practice location, and license type.

Subject to appropriations, the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce is authorized to provide student loan repayment for recipients delivering services as mental health and substance use professionals under certain capacities.

The DCA will increase supportive housing for the "familiar faces" population. The department will provide guidance on the implementation of tenant selection plans that do not pose a barrier due to a criminal record that is unrelated to one's fitness as a tenant by December 1, 2023. An assessment into the feasibility of reserved housing for the "familiar faces" population and inventory of such existing programs will take place. Incentives will be included in DCA's annual Qualified Allocation Plan to increase supportive housing options for the "familiar faces" population, and a landlord incentive fund will be explored. DCA will submit an annual report to the governor and General Assembly on the progress of such activities.

Authored By: Rep. Todd Jones (25th)
House Public Health
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 163 Nays: 3

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 529 Insurance; minimum amounts of uninsured and underinsured coverage to be maintained by transportation network and taxi service companies; provide

Bill Summary: HB 529 reduces the required minimum uninsured and underinsured motorist coverage for transportation network companies from \$1 million to \$300,000 for bodily injury and death per accident, \$100,000 for bodily injury per person, and \$250,000 for property damage.

Authored By: Rep. Noel Williams (148th)
House Insurance
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 153 Nays: 9

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute
Amendments:

HB 530 Civil practice; protective orders for certain high-ranking officers; provide

Bill Summary: HB 530 allows for protective orders to prohibit depositions of high-ranking officers of private, public, and governmental organizations by showing that the officer lacks unique personal knowledge of any relevant subject matter to the pending action. The person seeking a protective order has the burden of establishing the factors necessary to be granted the protective order. If the party seeking discovery demonstrates that they have exhausted reasonable means of discovery but the discovery remains inadequate, good cause for a protective order will not be found. When a party seeking a protective order shows that an officer knows some but not all relevant matters, the court may limit the scope of the deposition rather than prohibiting the deposition.

The bill requires that a chief executive officer of a state government entity provide at least one designee for service of process for civil actions brought against the state. The contact information of the designee will be published conspicuously on the homepage of the entity's website.

Authored By: Rep. James Burchett (176th)
House Judiciary
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 156 Nays: 8

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 543 Courts; six-person jury trials in civil actions; revise an exception

Bill Summary: HB 543 increases the dollar threshold from \$25,000 to \$100,000 by which a party in a civil action in state court may demand a 12-member jury.

Authorized By: Rep. Matt Reeves (99th)
House Judiciary
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 161 Nays: 2

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HB 545 Agricultural Commodity Commission for Citrus Fruits; provide

Bill Summary: HB 545 creates the Agricultural Commodity Commission for Citrus Fruits beginning July 1, 2023, for producers who own or operate at least five acres of citrus fruit-bearing trees. Every three years a ballot will be taken to determine whether or not to continue the commission for another three years.

Authorized By: Rep. Charles Cannon (172nd)
House Agriculture & Consumer Affairs
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 172 Nays: 0

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

HR 96 Ad valorem tax; rate reduction for sale or harvest of timber; provide - CA

Bill Summary: HR 96 amends the Georgia Constitution, relating to the ad valorem taxation of timber, by reducing the rate of taxation from 2.5 times the rate of other real property to the same rate as other real property, beginning January 1, 2025.

The resolution requires the General Assembly to annually appropriate funds to each county, municipality, or school district that experiences a revenue reduction resulting from the revised tax rate on timber in an amount equal to 50 percent of the revenue reduction for the jurisdiction's first three percent of ad valorem tax revenue and 100 percent of revenue loss that exceeds three percent of the jurisdiction's ad valorem revenue. The annual appropriation is to begin January 1, 2026. Ballot language is included.

Authorized By: Rep. Noel Williams (148th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:
Floor Vote: Yeas: 170 Nays: 1
Floor Action: Adopted (Resolution)

Rule Applied: Structured
Committee 02-23-2023 Do Pass
Action:
Amendments:

Postponed Until Next Legislative Day**HB 128 Revenue and taxation; representation of minority business enterprises, women and veteran owned businesses in procurement of state contracts; provide**

Bill Summary: HB 128 revises definitions and language regarding minority owned businesses. The term 'member of a minority' is removed and replaced with 'classified subcontractor'. This definition is for a small business certified as a minority owned business. The commissioner of the Department of Administrative Services is required to maintain a list of classified subcontractors and make the list available to the general public by December 31 of each year. 'Minority' is defined as a member of a race which makes up less than fifty percent of the total state population and belongs to one or more of the following groups: Black, Hispanic, Asian pacific, Native American, or Asian-Indian American. A 'veteran owned business' is defined as a business owned by an individual who has served as a reservist or on active duty with a branch of the United States military and did not receive a dishonorable discharge. A 'woman owned business' is required to be operated by one or more women. The requirement for an application containing business history and documentation for classification as one of these terms is removed.

Authorized By: Rep. Soo Hong (103rd)

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured

Local Calendar**HB 492 Hartwell, City of; corporate boundaries; revise provisions**

Bill Summary: HB 492 revises the corporate boundaries of the City of Hartwell.

Authored By:	Rep. Alan Powell (33rd)	Rule Applied:	
House	Intragovernmental Coordination -	Committee	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Committee:	Local	Action:	
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

HB 539 Wilkes County; Probate Court judge also serve as chief magistrate judge of Magistrate Court; provide

Bill Summary: HB 539 provides that the judge of the Probate Court of Wilkes County will also serve as the chief magistrate judge of the Magistrate Court of Wilkes County.

Authored By:	Rep. Rob Leverett (123rd)	Rule Applied:	
House	Intragovernmental Coordination -	Committee	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Committee:	Local	Action:	
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

HB 547 East Dublin, City of; extend corporate limits

Bill Summary: HB 547 extends the corporate limits of the City of East Dublin.

Authored By:	Rep. Matt Hatchett (155th)	Rule Applied:	
House	Intragovernmental Coordination -	Committee	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Committee:	Local	Action:	
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

HB 569 Bryan County; State Court; judge shall serve in a full-time capacity; provide

Bill Summary: A bill to provide that the judge of the State Court of Bryan County will serve in a full-time capacity.

Authored By:	Rep. Ron Stephens (164th)	Rule Applied:	
House	Intragovernmental Coordination -	Committee	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Committee:	Local	Action:	
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

HB 580 Carroll County; Board of Education; compensation of members; change provisions

Bill Summary: HB 580 provides for the compensation of the Board of Education of Carroll County.

Authored By:	Rep. J Collins (71st)	Rule Applied:	
House	Intragovernmental Coordination -	Committee	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Committee:	Local	Action:	
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

HB 586 Haralson County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee

Bill Summary: HB 586 authorizes a technology fee by the Probate Court of Haralson County.

Authored By:	Rep. Tyler Smith (18th)	Rule Applied:	
House	Intragovernmental Coordination -	Committee	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Committee:	Local	Action:	
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

HB 596 Randolph County; Probate Court; authorize assessment and collection of a technology fee

Bill Summary: HB 596 authorizes a technology fee by the Probate Court of Randolph County.

Authored By:	Rep. Gerald Greene (154th)	Rule Applied:	
---------------------	----------------------------	----------------------	--

House Committee:	Intragovernmental Coordination - Local	Committee Action:	03-01-2023 Do Pass
Floor Vote:	Yeas: 170 Nays: 0	Amendments:	

Next on the Floor from the Committee on Rules

The Committee on Rules has fixed the calendar for the 28th Legislative Day, Monday, March 6, and bills may be called at the pleasure of the Speaker.

HB 166 Courts; provide for qualification of constables

Bill Summary: HB 166 modifies the eligibility requirements of constables to require an eligible person to: be at least 21 years old; be a U.S. citizen; be a registered voter; and have obtained a high school diploma or a general educational development (GED) diploma. The bill allows for a locality to impose additional requirements for the office of chief constable, constable, or both. These requirements apply to any constable taking office on or after July 1, 2023.

Authored By:	Rep. Karen Mathiak (74th)	Rule Applied:	Modified-Structured
House Committee:	Judiciary Non-Civil	Committee Action:	02-27-2023 Do Pass

HB 249 Education; needs based financial aid program; provide definition

Bill Summary: HB 249 provides Georgia College Completion Grant eligibility to students who have completed 70 percent of a four-year program or 45 percent of a two-year program. The maximum award amount per eligible student is set at \$3,500, with no single payment exceeding \$2,500.

Authored By:	Rep. Chuck Martin (49th)	Rule Applied:	Modified-Structured
House Committee:	Higher Education	Committee Action:	02-23-2023 Do Pass by Committee Substitute

HB 267 Income tax; failure of employers to comply with revenue provisions regarding employees; authorize private causes of action for equitable relief

Bill Summary: HB 267 permits civil causes of action for equitable relief when an employer fails to properly deduct and withhold funds from wages as required by O.C.G.A. 48-7-101 or fails to perform any other duty related to complying with revenue provisions. Any person bringing the civil action can seek injunctive relief to require the employer to comply with revenue provisions, whether or not there is a showing of special or irreparable damage to the person. A temporary restraining order and a preliminary injunction may be issued before a final determination is made on the civil action. When a final determination is made, the court will award costs and expenses of litigation, including attorneys' fees, to the prevailing party.

Authored By:	Rep. Tyler Smith (18th)	Rule Applied:	Modified-Structured
House Committee:	Judiciary	Committee Action:	02-28-2023 Do Pass

HB 458 Agriculture; hemp farming; provide for intent

Bill Summary: HB 458 amends O.C.G.A. 2-32-2 relating to hemp farming licensure, permitting, and product analysis. To sell hemp products in a retail setting, the establishment must be licensed annually by the Department of Agriculture. Consumable hemp products must have a QR code visible to allow customers to access the certificate of analysis conducted on the product. The department will randomly test consumable hemp products to ensure compliance with this Code section. The bill prohibits retailers from selling hemp products to any individual under the age of 21.

Authored By:	Rep. Clay Pirkle (169th)	Rule Applied:	Modified-Structured
---------------------	--------------------------	----------------------	---------------------

**House
Committee:**

Agriculture & Consumer Affairs

**Committee
Action:**03-01-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Substitute**HB 462 Raise the Age Act; enact**

Bill Summary: HB 462 is the 'Raise the Age Act'. The bill increases the jurisdiction of the juvenile court to include children who are 17 years old and revises various references in the Code to reflect this change. The bill establishes an implementation committee, which consists of 12 members and is responsible for conferring with appropriate agencies and interested parties regarding standards and practices of other jurisdictions, the most recent national standards, and the interested parties' views.

A superior court will maintain jurisdiction of those who are 17 years old at the time of the alleged crime when those individuals are alleged to have committed criminal gang activity or an offense that would be a felony, if tried as an adult, for a second or subsequent time.

Parts I and IV of the bill become effective upon the governor's signature. Parts II and III of the bill become effective January 1, 2025, subject to appropriations. If the co-chairpersons of the implementation committee determine that money was not appropriated for that year, the determination will be made during the following years until January 1, 2030. If those funds are appropriated in one of the following years, it will become effective on January 1 of that fiscal year.

Authored By: Rep. Mandi Ballinger (23rd)
House Juvenile Justice
Committee:

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 498 Funeral directors and embalmers; reinstatement of lapsed license; change certain provisions

Bill Summary: HB 498 allows for the reinstatement of a less than 10-year lapsed funeral director license.

Authored By: Rep. Danny Mathis (149th)
House Small Business Development
Committee:

Rule Applied: Modified-Structured
Committee 02-27-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 532 Pike County; Magistrate Court; chief judge; provide nonpartisan elections

Bill Summary: HB 532 provides nonpartisan elections for the chief judge of the Magistrate Court of Pike County.

Authored By: Rep. Beth Camp (135th)
House Intragovernmental Coordination
Committee:

Rule Applied: Modified-Open
Committee 02-28-2023 Do Pass
Action:

Committee Actions

Bills passing committees are reported to the Clerk's Office and are placed on the General Calendar.

Appropriations Committee

HR 48 Stinchcomb, Mr. Mario; compensate

Bill Summary: HR 48 authorizes the Department of Administrative Services to pay Mario Stinchcomb \$910,000 in the form of an annuity paid in equal monthly installments over 10 years beginning one year after an initial lump sum payment of \$300,300.

Authored By: Rep. Stacey Evans (57th)
House Committee: Appropriations

Committee Action: 03-02-2023 Do Pass

HR 49 Woolfolk, Mr. Michael; compensate

Bill Summary: HR 49 authorizes the Department of Administrative Services to pay Michael Woolfolk \$1,260,000 in the form of an annuity paid in equal monthly installments over 10 years beginning one year after an initial lump sum payment of \$415,800.

Authored By: Rep. Stacey Evans (57th)
House Committee: Appropriations

Committee Action: 03-02-2023 Do Pass

HR 55 Talley, Mr. Terry L.; compensate

Bill Summary: HR 55 authorizes the Department of Administrative Services to pay Terry Talley \$1,808,865 in the form of an annuity paid in equal monthly installments over 10 years beginning one year after an initial lump sum payment of \$596,925.

Authored By: Rep. Debbie Buckner (137th)
House Committee: Appropriations

Committee Action: 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee Substitute

HR 70 Inman, Mr. Devonia; compensate

Bill Summary: HR 70 authorizes the Department of Administrative Services to pay Devonia Inman \$1,610,000 in the form of an annuity paid in equal monthly installments over 10 years beginning one year after an initial lump sum payment of \$536,667.

Authored By: Rep. Penny Houston (170th)
House Committee: Appropriations

Committee Action: 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee Substitute

Budget and Fiscal Affairs Oversight Committee

HB 581 Audits and Accounts, Department of; revise deadlines, selection criteria, and required contents for certain annual economic analyses

Bill Summary: HB 581 requires the Department of Audits and Accounts to conduct 10 economic analyses for income tax credits or sales and use exemptions that will sunset or be repealed within two years of July 1 of the year the economic analyses are conducted. If more than 10 tax credits or sales and use exemptions qualify, it will be determined by chronological order. If less than 10 qualify, the chairperson of the House Ways and Means Committee and chairperson of the Senate Committee on Finance may request half of the remaining economic analyses.

Requests must be made to the department by April 15 and analyses must be completed by November 15. The economic analyses must include recommendations for improving the state's return on

investment from the law being proposed or studied.

Authored By: Rep. Shaw Blackmon (146th)
House Budget and Fiscal Affairs Oversight **Committee** 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Committee: **Action:**

HB 611 Budgetary and financial affairs; disposition of state funds derived from certain legal judgments or settlements; provide

Bill Summary: HB 611 requires all funds from legal judgments awarded to the state on or after June 1, 2023, or legal settlements entered into by the state or on its behalf by June 1, 2023, to be held by the state treasury until appropriated by the General Assembly.

Authored By: Rep. James Burchett (176th)
House Budget and Fiscal Affairs Oversight **Committee** 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Committee: **Action:**

Education Committee

HB 340 Education; daily duty-free planning periods for teachers in grades six through twelve; provide

Bill Summary: HB 340 amends O.C.G.A. 20-2-218 to protect planning periods for teachers. Teachers who are in the classroom more than 50 percent of a regular school day are required to have a duty-free planning period, with some exceptions related to safety.

Authored By: Rep. John Corbett (174th)
House Education **Committee** 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Committee: **Action:** Substitute

HB 469 Education, Department of; loitering or disrupting schools; provide for requirements and authorization

Bill Summary: HB 469 directs the Department of Education to evaluate and share best practices with public schools and school systems for the development of crisis response mapping data. The department will work with all state and local governmental entities to facilitate proper communication and sharing of pertinent information relating to threats, warnings, and developing situations. The department will evaluate best practices in the development, acquisition, and implementation of crisis response mapping data by September 1, 2023.

Authored By: Rep. Penny Houston (170th)
House Education **Committee** 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Committee: **Action:** Substitute

HB 504 Education; exclude amounts attributable to level 1 freeport exemptions for purposes of calculating local five mill share

Bill Summary: HB 504 removes the value of level 1 freeport exemptions from the equalized property tax digest for the purpose of calculating local five mill share and equalization.

Authored By: Rep. Matt Hatchett (155th)
House Education **Committee** 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Committee: **Action:** Substitute

HB 506 Education; recognition of certain accrediting agencies as reliable authorities as to quality of education offered in public secondary schools; provide

Bill Summary: HB 506 creates O.C.G.A. 20-14-96, which defines an accrediting agency as a reliable authority as to the quality of education offered in Georgia secondary schools.

The bill sets the standards and criteria accrediting agencies must meet by the State Board of Education to be recognized as an accrediting agency. The State Board of Education will have oversight authority of accrediting agencies, and may determine if an agency is not in compliance with

state standards. When disputes arise between an accrediting agency and a public secondary school, the school has the right to appeal to the state board.

Authoring By: Rep. Ginny Ehrhart (36th)
House Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 537 Early Care and Learning, Department of; age-appropriate literacy instruction training requirements for certain child care providers; provide

Bill Summary: HB 537 requires the Department of Early Care and Learning to develop evidence-based literacy instruction training requirements for childcare providers. The department must require annual training for teachers on developmentally-appropriate evidence-based literacy instruction. The Professional Standards Commission will create and implement standards for certifying educators and maintaining certification which focus on developmentally-appropriate evidence-based literacy instruction.

Authoring By: Rep. Becky Evans (89th)
House Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 538 Georgia Early Literacy Act; enact

Bill Summary: HB 538 creates the 'Georgia Early Literacy Act' to implement the science of reading in Georgia. School systems will be required to teach high-quality instructional materials approved by the State Board of Education in grades kindergarten through third grade.

The Department of Education must develop and provide training to kindergarten through third-grade teachers on the science of reading so teacher have the skills and knowledge to teach young students to read. Students across the state will take a universal reading screener assessment to monitor their progress in foundational literacy skills multiple times a year.

Authoring By: Rep. Bethany Ballard (147th)
House Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

Higher Education Committee

HB 228 Education; tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities; expand definition of approved school

Bill Summary: HB 228 expands tuition equalization grant eligibility to include higher education institutions which offer: baccalaureate programs in nursing; have a current physical presence in Georgia for at least five years; have received accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education; and have accreditation from either the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) or a regional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

These institutions must have a four-year average passage rate of at least 85 percent for the National Council Licensure Examination, and admit students who have a high school diploma or equivalency or a degree from an accredited postsecondary institution. Such institutions are only considered as approved institutions for students who enroll on or before July 1, 2025.

Authoring By: Rep. Katie Dempsey (13th)
House Higher Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 392 Georgia Endowment for Teaching Professionals; create

Bill Summary: HB 392 creates the Georgia Endowment for Teaching Professionals. The purpose of the endowment is to receive and distribute funds to support outstanding teaching professionals in

high-demand fields within the Technical College System of Georgia.

Authored By: Rep. Rick Jasperse (11th)
House Higher Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 605 REACH Scholarship; victims of human trafficking are eligible; provide

Bill Summary: HB 605 expands eligibility for the Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen (REACH) Scholarship to include victims of human trafficking.

Authored By: Rep. Robert Dickey (145th)
House Higher Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 607 Education; revise definition of Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar by changing ACT score requirement for certain students

Bill Summary: HB 607 changes the ACT score requirement for a Zell Miller Scholarship Scholar from 26 to a score equivalent to 1,200 on the SAT, as determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission using nationally-recognized standards. The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2024.

Authored By: Rep. Clay Pirkle (169th)
House Higher Education
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

Industry and Labor Committee

HB 282 Quality Basic Education Act; minimum course study in career readiness education for students in grades six through twelve; provide

Bill Summary: HB 282 clarifies that the career course that the State Board of Education must prescribe for grades six through 12 must be a career readiness course, focusing on instruction and training experiences. The bill requires the Department of Education to assemble and develop resources and materials regarding career readiness and employability, and to make those resources available to state public schools. The minimum course of study must be ready for implementation by July 1, 2023.

Authored By: Rep. Mesha Mainor (56th)
House Industry and Labor
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 501 Minors; employment certificate requirements; repeal certain provisions

Bill Summary: HB 501 removes the age cap that applies to age discrimination claims in the state by making it apply to those age 40 years or older. The bill also allows a minor 14 years or older to be employed during school vacations for purposes of working in the care and maintenance of lawns, gardens, and shrubbery owned and leased by the employer of the minor, including the operation of equipment.

The minor must be covered by an insurance plan for accident or sickness, or a workers' compensation plan. The bill preempts localities from requiring issuance of an employment certificate or a youth work permit as a condition of payment or requiring an employer to obtain an employment certificate from a minor. The commissioner of the Department of Labor is permitted to investigate the age of any minor employed, hear evidence, and require the production of relevant books and records.

Authored By: Rep. Deborah Silcox (53rd)
House Industry and Labor
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 556 Pregnancy Protection Act; enact

Bill Summary: HB 556 is the 'Pregnancy Protection Act', which creates additional protections for pregnant women who are employed. The bill includes several conditions that would constitute an unfair employment practice by an employer, unless the employer can show that the business would suffer an undue hardship as a result. Employers are required to provide written notice of the right to be free from discrimination on the basis of pregnancy to: new employees upon employment; existing employees within 120 days after the effective date; and any employee who notifies the employer of the pregnancy within 10 days of the notification.

A claimant under the bill has a cause of action for retaliation when an employer retaliates against a claimant because she: asked for a reasonable accommodation; made a report or a charge related to pregnancy protection; instituted or participated in an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or action related to pregnancy protection; or provided information, testified, or is known by the employer to be planning to testify in a matter related to pregnancy protection. Relief under this action can include compensation for lost wages, punitive damages, reasonable attorneys' fees, and other related expenses. A court can also grant an injunction, temporary restraining order, or other order.

Authored By: Rep. Tyler Smith (18th)
House Industry and Labor
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

Judiciary Non-Civil Committee**HB 126 Appeal and error; judgments deemed directly appealable; change a provision**

Bill Summary: HB 126 defines the term "final judgment" in O.C.G.A. 5-6-34 to include an order in a criminal proceeding that has a multiple-count indictment or accusation and that results in a final adjudication of fewer than all of the counts in the indictment or accusation. The list of cases that an appellate court must take on appeal is revised to include direct appeals from guilty pleas.

The bill adds the ability for a defendant to seek an out-of-time motion for new trial or notice of appeal within 100 days from expiration of the time period for the filing if certain conditions are met. If a motion for a new trial is made and it is a substantial amendment, the state must be given 10 days to respond and present evidence, although the court can provide a longer period of time at its discretion.

Authored By: Rep. Tyler Smith (18th)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 181 Controlled Substances; mitragynine and hydroxymitragynine are Schedule I; provide

Bill Summary: HB 181 adds the compound 7-hydroxymitragynine to the definition of "kratom". The bill limits the methods that kratom can be ingested and requires that the sale of kratom be only behind the counter in stores. Anyone violating this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

The bill requires all kratom products to be derived from the natural kratom plant. Any plants that are manufactured or processed cannot be modified to increase the levels of mitragynine and 7-hydroxymitragynine beyond the following limits: 150 mg of mitragynine per serving; 0.5 7-hydroxymitragynine per gram; or 1 mg 7-hydroxymitragynine per serving. No product can be sold or delivered in this state above those thresholds.

A kratom processor cannot sell or distribute a kratom product that is adulterated or contains certain compounds or substances within it. An entity that manufactures, distributes, sells, or delivers kratom must maintain a registered agent in the state. A processor who knowingly or recklessly commits an act in violation of O.C.G.A. 16-13-122 will be guilty of a high and aggravated misdemeanor as a first offense and a felony on a second or subsequent offense, with a penalty of imprisonment between one to 15 years; a maximum fine of \$100,000; or both. A processor who negligently commits an act in violation of O.C.G.A. 16-13-122 will be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a maximum fine of

\$1,000. A person who suffers injury or damages as a result of a violation of this Code section can also bring a civil action for actual damages, which are presumed to be at least \$250, together with court costs. A court will award treble damages for an intentional violation. This bill is effective January 1, 2024.

Author By: Rep. Rick Townsend (179th)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 231 Prosecuting Attorneys Oversight Commission; create

Bill Summary: HB 231 creates the Prosecuting Attorneys Oversight Commission, which consists of an investigative panel and a hearing panel. The investigative panel is responsible for investigating alleged conduct that constitutes grounds for discipline, which is specifically outlined in the bill and includes: mental or physical incapacity; willful misconduct in office; willful and persistent failure to perform duties; conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude; conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice; allowing an assistant district attorney or assistant solicitor general to commit acts that would constitute removal; and violating the State Bar of Georgia's Rules of Professional Conduct.

Complaints made to the investigative panel are required to show evidence that constitutes the grounds for discipline. If the complaint makes an allegation on the basis of a charging decision, plea offer, or one of the other specific issues in the bill, then the complaint must also show that it was likely that the decision was made based on one of the specific criteria such as: undue bias; an undisclosed conflict of interest; or a stated, written policy that demonstrates a district attorney or solicitor general categorically refuses to prosecute certain offenses. The commission will commence by October 1, 2023, and the rules must be established by April 1, 2024.

The bill adds an additional duty for district attorneys and solicitors general to review each individual case to determine whether probable cause for prosecution exists, and to make a prosecutorial decision based on the facts and circumstances of that case. This duty is also grounds for a recall if a district attorney or solicitor general fails to perform it.

Author By: Rep. Joseph Gullett (19th)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 446 Crimes and offenses; offense of drive-by shooting; provide

Bill Summary: HB 446 modifies the crime of aggravated assault to include when someone immediately exits a vehicle and discharges a firearm at a person, an occupied motor vehicle, or an occupied building. The penalty is five to 20 years imprisonment. The crime of criminal damage to property in the first degree is revised to include when someone knowingly and without justification causes damage to a building by discharging a firearm while inside a vehicle or after immediately exiting a motor vehicle. This also increases the penalty for second or subsequent violations to imprisonment of between five to 20 years.

The bill creates a new crime of drive-by shooting when a person who is either in a motor vehicle or is close to a motor vehicle that they used to drive to the location, discharges a firearm at another person, motor vehicle, or dwelling, with the intent to injure. The penalty is between five to 20 years imprisonment. Penalties for drive-by shootings that result in serious bodily injuries or are against a person under the age of 16 years old are also imprisonment of between five to 20 years.

Author By: Rep. Matt Reeves (99th)
House Judiciary Non-Civil
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

Motor Vehicles Committee

HB 348 Motor vehicles; standards for signs warning of use of automated traffic enforcement safety devices; provide

Bill Summary: HB 348 requires warning signs for traffic safety enforcement devices and school zone speed limit reduction to display flashing yellow lights while the speed reduction is in effect. The speed limit may be enforced 30 minutes prior to and 30 minutes after the school starts; 30 minutes prior to and 30 minutes after the school dismisses unless the school campus is bisected by a highway; and when the driver is 10 miles per hour over the speed limit.

When a citation is issued, the driver will receive an assigned hearing date that must be within 60 days of issuance of the citation. If a penalty is unpaid 30 days after a final notice has been mailed, the vehicle's registration cannot be renewed until the penalty and late fees have been collected.

The bill requires an assigned hearing date to be issued with a citation for improperly overtaking a school bus. Registration of the vehicle cannot be renewed until the penalty and late fees are collected.

Author By: Rep. J Collins (71st)
House Motor Vehicles
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

Public Health Committee

HB 571 Georgia Alzheimer's and Related Dementias State Plan; updated every four years; provide

Bill Summary: HB 571 revises the membership of the Georgia Alzheimer's and Related Dementias State Plan Advisory Council to include the chairperson of the House Committee on Public Health. The council must amend the state plan every four years. Beginning January 1, 2025, and every four years thereafter, the council must provide the governor and the General Assembly with a report that describes the impact of dementia in Georgia and updates the progress of the state plan.

Author By: Rep. Deborah Silcox (53rd)
House Public Health
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

Regulated Industries Committee

HB 473 Crimes and offenses; local governments operate bingo based games to offset reduced tax collections resulting from state-owned forest lands; authorize

Bill Summary: HB 473 allows any local government with a highly-impacted tax digest to obtain a license from the Secretary of State to operate bingo games. The license requires an annual fee of \$1,000 and is valid for 10 years. The bill provides specific regulations as to the records required and availability of bingo machines for inspection by the Secretary of State. A qualifying local government can contract with a private party to operate the bingo game, and the adjusted net income from the game will be used for a public purpose.

The bill allows a county that consists of at least 50,000 acres of state-owned land on which the county cannot collect tax revenue to receive a grant of funds from the State Forestry Commission. Counties operating bingo machines are not eligible to receive a grant for state-owned land.

Author By: Rep. Buddy DeLoach (167th)
House Regulated Industries
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

Transportation Committee

HB 189 Highways, bridges, and ferries; allowable variance for weight limitations upon a vehicle or load; provide for

Bill Summary: HB 189 provides for a 10 percent variance to the 80,000 pound gross vehicle weight limit for trucks hauling certain commodities from point of origin to point of processing within a 250-mile radius. In order to haul these loads, the tractor and trailer must be certified to meet or exceed the weight allowable by the variance.

The bill provides penalties for violations of the variance. When the weight of the vehicle is less than 93,000 pounds, a penalty of five cents per pound over the allowed weight limit not including any variance is assessed. When the weight is over 93,000 pounds but less than 98,000 pounds, the penalty is 10 cents per pound over allowed weight limit not including any variance. For loads greater than 98,000 pounds, the penalty is 15 cents per pound for all excess over allowable weight not including any variance.

Authored By: Rep. Steven Meeks (178th)
House Transportation
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 617 Highways, bridges and ferries; development and maintenance of a state-wide freight and logistics implementation plan; provide

Bill Summary: HB 617 adds the development of a state-wide freight and logistics implementation plan to the duties of the director of planning at the Department of Transportation. The state-wide freight and logistics implementation plan is based on a 20-year projection. It identifies example project types, specific projects to be programmed, or critical corridors, taking into account foundational investments that ensure: maintenance of existing transportation systems; catalytic investments that strategically expand the transportation system to both support economic development and improve the mobility of goods and people; and innovative investments that promote industry growth and sustain existing industry use of the freight network.

The bill creates the Georgia Freight 2050 Program to be administered by the department to enhance the state's investment in the state-wide transportation freight network. The program will fund and support projects included in the freight plans identified in Code Section 32-2-41.4. Priority is given to capacity enhancements including: widening of interstates and non-interstate arterial roads; interchange, intersection, and other operational improvements; intermodal or multimodal capacity enhancements; railroad crossing access and safety improvements; commercial motor vehicle parking and safety improvements; and projects located in an international ocean trade zone.

Authored By: Rep. Rick Jasperse (11th)
House Transportation
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HR 256 Sophia Ruth Fisher Interchange; Tift County; dedicate

Bill Summary: HR 256 is the annual House road dedication resolution. The omnibus dedication package includes:

HR 256, dedicating the interchange at Willis Still Road and Interstate 75 in Tift County as the Sophia Ruth Fisher Interchange;

HR 69, dedicating the bridge on State Route 39 over Cemochechobee Creek in Clay County as the John E. Brown Bridge;

HR 97, dedicating the bridge on State Route 190 over Lane Street in Meriwether County as the Sergeant Eddie Thomas Terry Memorial Bridge;

HR 125, dedicating the portion of State Route 138 from Tara Boulevard in Clayton County to

Scarlett Drive in Clayton County as the Dr. Barbara Pulliam Highway;

HR 167, dedicating the portion of State Route 138 from Highway 54 to North McDonough Street in Clayton County as the Jeffrey E. Turner Parkway;

HR 207, dedicating the portion of Highway 78 from the east boundary of the City of Tallapoosa to the west boundary of the City of Tallapoosa in Haralson County as the Mayor William "Pete" Bridges Memorial Highway;

HR 208, dedicating the portion of Georgia Business Route 10 within the city limits of Washington in Wilkes County as the MLK Memorial Drive;

HR 230, dedicating the portion of State Route 57 East from Mile Marker 15 to the Johnson/Emanuel County Line in Johnson County, Georgia, as the Deputy Emory Rowland Memorial Highway; and

HR 231, dedicating the State Route 125 bridge over Vanceville Road near the Berrien/Tift County line in Berrien County as the West Berrien Vietnam War Veterans Memorial Bridge.

Authored By: Rep. Clay Pirkle (169th)
House Transportation
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

Ways & Means Committee

HB 82 Income tax; limit eligibility for rural physician tax credit to physicians who qualify on or before December 31, 2023

Bill Summary: HB 82 amends O.C.G.A. 48-7-29, relating to tax credits for rural physicians, limiting eligibility for the current tax credit to rural physicians who qualify on or before May 15, 2023 and repealing the credit on December 31, 2028.

The bill subsequently creates a tax credit of up to \$5,000 for rural healthcare professionals, defined as physicians and dentists operating in a rural county. The tax credit may be claimed for up to five years, provided that the healthcare professional continues operating in a rural county. No healthcare professional practicing in a rural county on or before May 15, 2023 is eligible for the tax credit unless they have practiced in a non-rural county for at least three years. If a healthcare professional qualifies for less than the full 12 months in their first year, they will receive a prorated amount of the credit.

Authored By: Rep. Mack Jackson (128th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 86 Sales and use tax; sales of tangible personal property used for or in the renovation or expansion of certain aquariums; exempt

Bill Summary: HB 86 amends O.C.G.A. 48-8-3, relating to exemptions from sales and use tax, extending the period of time for which qualifying aquariums may be exempt from state sales and use tax associated with renovations and expansions to July 1, 2023 until June 30, 2027.

Relating to sales and use tax exemptions associated with renovations and expansions for zoological institutions, the bill changes the eligible time period to July 1, 2023 until June 30, 2027, or until the aggregate sale and use tax refund amount reached \$800,000, whichever occurs first.

Authored By: Rep. Trey Rhodes (124th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 239 Income tax; purchases and acquisitions of qualified investment property to include mining facilities; expand credits

Bill Summary: HB 239 amends O.C.G.A. 48-7-40.2, 48-7-40.3, and 48-7-40.4, relating to state income tax, by expanding purchases and acquisitions of qualified investment property for manufacturing and telecommunications facilities eligible for a tax credit to include aggregate or mineral mining facilities.

Authorized By: Rep. Bruce Williamson (112th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 290 Revenue and taxation; county tax commissioner duties; revise provisions

Bill Summary: HB 290 amends O.C.G.A. 48-5-359.1 to allow municipalities to contract with county tax commissioners to prepare a city's tax digest and assess and collect city taxes, fees, and assessments in the same manner as county taxes. An agreement is only eligible for a municipality, or portions of a municipality, that are located within a county tax assessor's jurisdiction. The contract must be negotiated and agreed upon by the municipality, the county tax commissioner, and the county, and is limited to the current term of county tax commissioner, plus one year. The contract must specify the services to be offered, the amount to be paid to the county, and the amount to be paid to the tax commissioner.

The bill requires that tax commissioners receive amounts stipulated in the contract up to 50 percent of the minimum annual salary for the tax commissioner pursuant to O.C.G.A. 48-5-183 and subsection (g) of O.C.G.A. 48-5-137. If any amount to be paid to the tax commissioner in a year exceeds the maximum amount allowed, then the excess funds will be returned to the municipalities no later than April 1 of the following year in a prorated share based on the total number of tax parcels within each municipality.

Authorized By: Rep. Mitchell Scoggins (14th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 412 Income tax; repeal a limitation on types of partnerships that may elect to pay income taxes at the entity level

Bill Summary: HB 412 amends O.C.G.A. 48-7-23, relating to taxation of partnerships, by removing a limitation stipulating that the associated subsection only applies to a partnership that is 100 percent directly owned and controlled by eligible shareholders of an "S" corporation.

Authorized By: Rep. Bruce Williamson (112th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass by Committee
Action: Substitute

HB 413 Georgia Agribusiness and Rural Jobs Act; second round of funding and period for applications; provide

Bill Summary: HB 413 amends O.C.G.A. 33-1-25, relating to the 'Georgia Agribusiness and Rural Jobs Act', by allowing a second round of funding of \$100 million to be available for capital investments. The bill increases the application fee from \$5,000 to \$25,000, and establishes an annual maintenance fee of \$7,500 for all rural funds. Rural funds must submit an initial report to the Department of Community Affairs within 15 days after each capital investment rather than the current report due date of the second anniversary of the initial credit. Rural funds must also include the fund's total eligible capital investments as a percentage of its total capital investments in their annual report.

Authorized By: Rep. Noel Williams (148th)
House Ways & Means
Committee:

Committee 03-02-2023 Do Pass
Action:

HB 431 Special purpose local option sales tax; counties; provisions

Bill Summary: HB 413 amends O.C.G.A. 48-8-111, relating to imposition of a county special purpose local option sales tax, by eliminating certain limitations on counties that both implement a special local option sales tax and levy an equalized homestead option sales tax. This includes restricting the use of special purpose local option sale tax revenue to transportation, public safety, debt service, and repair of capital projects, as well as limiting the amount of special purpose local option sales tax proceeds that can be used to repair capital projects to 15 percent of total proceeds.

Authored By: Rep. Karla Drenner (85th)
House Committee: Ways & Means

Committee Action: 03-02-2023 Do Pass

HB 482 Income tax; tax credits for establishing or relocating quality jobs; provide clarification

Bill Summary: HB 482 amends O.C.G.A. 48-7-40.17, relating to tax credits for establishing or relocating quality jobs, by revising the definition of "taxpayer" to include organizations exempt from tax, pursuant to O.C.G.A. 48-7-25, to the extent that a business operated by such an organization generates unrelated business income as defined in Section 512 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Authored By: Rep. Steven Sainz (180th)
House Committee: Ways & Means

Committee Action: 03-02-2023 Do Pass

Committee Meeting Schedule

This meeting schedule is up to date at the time of this report, but meeting dates and times are subject to change. To keep up with the latest schedule, please visit www.legis.ga.gov to view all upcoming events.

Friday - March 3, 2023

8:00 AM	Ways & Means Income Tax Subcommittee (House)	406 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
8:15 AM	Ways & Means Ad Valorem Subcommittee (House)	406 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
8:30 AM	Ways & Means Sales Tax Subcommittee (House)	406 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
8:45 AM	Ways & Means Public Finance & Policy Subcommittee (House)	406 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
9:00 AM	JUDICIARY (CIVIL) COMMITTEE (House)	132 CAP	VIDEO	
9:00 AM	GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (House)	506 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
9:00 AM	WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE (House)	406 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
10:00 AM	MOTOR VEHICLES COMMITTEE (House)	406 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda
12:00 PM	PUBLIC SAFETY & HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE (House)	606 CLOB	VIDEO	Agenda